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Austin hosts a RIOT

By Donny Palmer, TBA Member Relations Officer

Austin recently hosted the first Conference of the Robbery Investigators of Texas (RIOT) with a three-day series of meetings at the downtown Omni Hotel. More than 175 state, federal and local law enforcement officers heard excellent presentations from some of the most knowledgeable and respected investigators in the country. TBA joined several banks and private security professionals to sponsor the program.

The intense program covered many areas of interest to investigators, including, but not limited to:

- Statement and threat analysis
- Embezzlement investigations
- Robbery training — what to do before, during and after a robbery
- Case studies
- Workplace violence
- Roles and responsibilities of the corporate security officer
- Environmental risk assessment
- Bandit Shield initiative

RIOT is the brainchild of Round Rock Police Detective Shawn Scott, FBI Special Agent Dennis May and Texas Ranger Matt Lindeman. Scott, the president of RIOT, is on loan to the FBI, and partners with May on the Central Texas Violent Crimes Task Force. In addition to working robbery cases, the Task Force provides bank robbery training for financial institutions in the region.

The main reason RIOT was formed was to provide an outlet for information sharing regarding robberies and violent crimes in Central Texas. Members are able to log into the RIOT website and review activities in specific categories, such as banks, jewelry stores, armored cars, retail and pharmacies. Participants can quickly download pertinent



Represented at the RIOT Conference are, left to right, Austin Police Chief Art Acevedo, FBI Special Agent Dennis May, FBI Special Agent in Charge of the San Antonio Division Armando Fernandez, Round Rock Police Detective and FBI Task Force Officer/ RIOT President Shawn Scott, Round Rock Assistant Police Chief Troy Evans and Major Frank Malinak of Texas Rangers Company F.

information regarding the event, including physical descriptions, photos and a narrative of the circumstances that can be used to match similar crimes to allow law enforcement to collaborate to solve crimes.

RIOT makes the information accessible via a mobile application so officers can conduct research in the field. Maps, incident data and regional/national information filters allow a wide range of research opportunities. I urge bank security and corporate security officers to visit the RIOT website and consider becoming a member.

Another useful tool that RIOT promotes is the Bandit Shield Crime Initiative, which was created in 2012 by the San Antonio Division of the FBI. Bandit Shield is a cooperative program in which financial institutions adopt best practices and other security measures developed to deter robberies. Institutions completing the training post Bandit Shield door decals to warn would-be robbers that the institutions have taken special measures to prevent crimes.

The inaugural conference was a huge success, and plans for the 2014 Conference, which is tentatively scheduled for Austin, are already underway. If you have questions about RIOT or Bandit Shield or wish to arrange robbery training for your institution, please contact Shawn Scott at 512-569-0465 or email him at shawn.scott@ic.fbi.gov. You may also become a member of RIOT by accessing its website at www.robberysinvestigatorssoftexas.org.

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Welcome new member

TBA is proud to welcome this new member to our Texas Banking family:

Stockmans Bank

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